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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY MEETING,
U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: Almost all major Chinese-language papers in Taiwan gave front-page coverage to New York Yankees pitcher Wang Chien-ming, who is listed by "Time Magazine" as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. The English-language dailies, however, all gave front-page coverage to AIT Director Stephen Young, who said in a Thursday press conference that Taiwan should focus on strengthening its defensive capabilities and should move to pass the arms procurement budget as early as possible. The pro-independence "Liberty Times" ran a banner headline on page twelve that said "Stephen Young: Ruling and Opposition Parties Blame Each Other for Failing to Pass the Arms Procurement Bill." The pro-unification "United Daily News" ran a news story on page eight with the headline "The United States Does Not Approve of Taiwan's Development of Offensive Weapons."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a news analysis in the pro-status quo "China Times" discussed AIT Director Young's remarks that "this is not the first time that cross-Strait issue was not included in the joint declaration of the Two-plus-Two meeting." The article said Young's statement seemed to dwell on the minor points while avoiding touching the core issue. With regard to U.S.-China-Taiwan relations, an editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" discussed Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte's recent remarks before the U.S. Congress and said his comments are "just a sad reminder that the current US administration is a parody of the kind of statesmanship that once existed in Washington." An op-ed piece in the "Taipei Times" said U.S.-Taiwan relations are at a sensitive juncture requiring discussions on a regular basis. End summary.

¶3. U.S.-Japan Security Meeting

"The United States' and Japan's Avoiding Discussion of Controversial Cross-Strait Situation Has Impact on Taiwan"

Washington correspondent Liu Ping noted in an analysis in the pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (5/4):

"... [AIT Director] Stephen Young said in Taipei that 'this is not the first time that the cross-Strait issue was not mentioned' in the joint declaration of the Two-plus-Two meeting. But such a statement gave [people] the feeling that [he was] dwelling on the minor points but avoiding touching the core of the matter. This is because there are always different forms of documents coming out in the wake of the Two-plus-Two meeting. The 'common strategic goals' established in 2005 was an original approach, so for any follow-on changes, one must compare them with this historical document.

"Two 'Two-plus-Two' meetings were held since 2005, but the two meetings were held mainly to discuss the re-alignment of the U.S. military. As a result, there was no real record of 'common strategic goals.' But for this year, the sentence regarding

'encouraging both sides of the Taiwan Strait to resolve their disputes peacefully' was removed from the results of this year's meeting. This is what it really matters. During the joint press conference afterwards, a sensitive reporter sensed the change and thus questioned U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Even though Rice personally indicated that 'there is no change in the policy,' such an approach [i.e. the removal of the cross-Strait issue] was very special, given that the fundamental situation across the Taiwan Strait remains basically intact. ..."

14. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

A) "All Too Hard for the State Department"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (5/4):

".... But what was disturbing on Tuesday was the interaction between Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte and his interlocutors on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Republican Representative Steve Chabot questioned Negroponte over the possibility of changing the government's stance on allowing senior Taiwanese officials to visit Washington. ... Unsurprisingly, Negroponte poured cold water on the idea. ... What is disturbing about these comments is Negroponte's apparent ignorance of the subtleties and nuance of the 'one China' policy.

"A seasoned diplomat should be able to discern the difference between a 'view that there is one government of China' and acknowledging 'that Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China.' The formulation of 'one China' in the communique is a masterpiece of diplomatic slipperiness. What does it mean to 'acknowledge'? What does it mean to 'maintain'? And most important, how does one define 'Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait'? The phrasing of the communique was designed to give the US government as much wiggle-room as possible. This is

because the officials who devised it were not arrogant enough to assume that they knew what the future might hold for Taiwan and China and their relationship with the US

"Negroponte's comments, however, are just a sad reminder that the current US administration is a parody of the kind of statesmanship that once existed in Washington. The unthinking embrace of what is basically the Chinese definition of 'one China,' rather than a defense of the longstanding US policy, shows how far Washington has fallen in its lack of imagination and competence. There is no one in the US administration or in the world who knows how the 'situation' in the Taiwan Strait will be resolved. Yet the Bush administration continues to indicate that it not only believes it know what the future holds for this complex situation, but that it is simply tired of dealing with the complexities of Taiwan altogether. How unfortunate that policymakers in Washington no longer seek to stand on the shoulders of giants, instead of preferring to be led by dwarves."

B) "US, Taiwan Ties at a Sensitive Time"

Nat Bellocchi, a former chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan and now a special adviser to the Liberty Times Group, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (5/4):

".... Time has brought some changes. Despite its preference not to intervene, the US has found that dealing with a free democracy isn't always easy. The US sees some differences: credibility, unclear communication, constitutional reform, the meaning of the status quo and the lack of military support, to name a few. Taiwan also sees differences: a lack of transparency, the US' unilaterally established rules of engagement with Taiwan and a lack of high-level meetings, among others. All of these require discussions on a regular basis. ..."

"The political changes in Taiwan are already beginning. The US is weighing which of the two parties in Taiwan will win in the legislature and the presidency and what impact the result will have on US interests with China and other East Asian countries. Some better form of dialogue between the US and Taiwan has long been

needed, and it will be needed in the years ahead. . . ."

YOUNG